

# THE SCOTCH PRESBYTERIAN ELOQUENCE

## A POST-REVOLUTION PAMPHLET

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### I

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON in a letter to Charles Baxter dated 6th December, 1893, says, "It is singular how obscure to me this decade of Scots history remains 1690-1700 ; a deuce of a want of light and grouping to it"<sup>1</sup> This complaint of Stevenson could still be echoed to-day, particularly by the student of Church History. There is a want of clarity in that period immediately following the Revolution Settlement. The light has beaten fiercely upon the great incidents and personalities of the immediately preceding period—the Covenanting and Killing Times ; but with the restoration and establishment of Presbytery, the curtain falls and the picture is less distinct. Studies have been made of the Cameronians and biographies of William Carstares,<sup>2</sup> John Hepburn,<sup>3</sup> John McMillan<sup>4</sup> and others have been written, but there is still a want of light and grouping to the whole picture of Church life of the period. Especially does this hold with reference to the men of the Post-Revolution Church of Scotland holding their position somewhere between the "outed" Episcopacy and the extreme Presbyterianism of the Cameronians. Historians hold conflicting opinions about the period. Dr. A. R. McEwen says : "In Scotland after the Revolution Settlement religion was singularly dry, harsh and pedantic. There probably never was a time when Presbyterianism showed less of its strength and more of its weakness."<sup>5</sup> This rather derogatory estimate of the Revolution Church is countered by the Rev. John Warrick in the Preface to his study of the Moderators of the Church of Scotland from 1690-1740. He quotes, for example, Dr. Thomas Chalmers in his correspondence with Lord Aberdeen, "It should never be forgotten that the Church was never more efficient as a Christian and moral institute

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Sir Sidney Colvin, Skerryvore Edition. R. L. S. Works.

<sup>2</sup> Principal Story : *William Carstares*.

<sup>3</sup> Wm. McMillan : *John Hepburn and the Hebronites*.

<sup>4</sup> H. M. B. Reid : *A Cameronian Apostle*.

<sup>5</sup> A. R. McEwen : *Antoinette Bourignon*, p. 209.

than from 1690 to 1712.”<sup>1</sup> And Principal Cunningham is quoted: “For almost twenty years after the Revolution the Church of Scotland was, upon the whole, in a most efficient condition and conferred most important benefits upon the country.”<sup>2</sup> If we are to form a judgment as between such conflicting statements as these we must go to the writings of the period in question. There we shall obtain some first-hand evidence as to the temper of the time, the controversies that agitated men’s minds and the characters of the chief personalities. Thereafter we may be better able to accept one or other of the above-mentioned estimates of the period.

The student of the decade 1690-1700 is immediately confronted with a mass of pamphlets. There hardly ever was such a time of pamphleteering in the history of the Church. The theme was the relative merits of the newly established Presbytery and the “outed” Episcopacy. The Episcopalians were the attackers—the Presbyterians defended themselves. Some of the discussion was on a high historical and academic level, such as the exchange of views between John Sage<sup>3</sup> and Gilbert Rule.<sup>4</sup> This was serious and learned with copious references made to Cyprian and other Church Fathers. There were other pamphlets, however, written on a considerably lower level full of personalities and animosity. Into this category comes the pamphlet under discussion in this paper, that lively piece of scurrility entitled, *The Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*. This is one of the best known writings of the period and has been reissued repeatedly in succeeding years. To read it is to catch something of the atmosphere of the period, and to encounter some of its personalities. Henry Grey Graham in his study of the 18th century says of such writings as this: “They are weary, though curious, reading, those old tractates breathing out cruelty, in their rough paper and miserable type yellow with age and peat smoke.”<sup>5</sup> Against this it might be held that this pamphlet we are to consider has still the power, after all these years, to evoke partisan feelings in its readers, who, according to their viewpoint, may be enraged by its misrepresentations or amused by its thrusts. It may seem to many to be too prejudiced and vulgar to treat in any objective way. Yet it was born of its time and it is in an authentic writing of the age such as this that we may find light upon the period; and at the same time consider a writing which has had an interest for succeeding periods also.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Thomas Chalmers: *Correspondence*, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Principal Cunningham: *Church Principles*, p. 455.

<sup>3</sup> *The Principles of the Cyprianic Age, with regard to Episcopal Power and Jurisdiction*, 1695, etc.

<sup>4</sup> *The Cyprianick-Bishop, examined and found not to be a Diocesan*, 1696, etc.

<sup>5</sup> Henry Grey Graham: *Social Life of Scotland of the 18th Century*, p. 278.

## II

It was in the year 1692 that there was published *The Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*. The Pamphlet War had been in full swing since the Revolution. The dispossessed Episcopalians had taken up the pen to attack their opponents, to uphold their cause and to discredit the newly Established Church. One of the most active writers for the Episcopal cause was Dr. Alexander Monro, who had been deposed from the Principalship of Edinburgh University. In a pamphlet called *A Letter to a Friend*, published in 1692, he set out to give "an account of all the Treatises that have been published with relation to the Present Persecution of the Church of Scotland."<sup>1</sup> He gives a list of some nineteen pamphlets written both from the Episcopal and Presbyterian point of view. The Episcopalians include John Sage, Thomas Morer, John Cockburn, William Strachan, Sir George Mackenzie and himself. The Presbyterians include Dr. Gilbert Rule, who was appointed Principal of Edinburgh University in place of Dr. Monro. Rule was appointed officially by the General Assembly to answer these writings of the Episcopalians and issued *A Vindication of the Church of Scotland, being an answer to a Paper entituled, 'Some questions concerning Episcopal and Presbyterial Government in Scotland,'* 1691; and a *Second Vindication of the Church of Scotland, being an answer to five Pamphlets,* 1691. The five pamphlets are amongst those listed by Dr. Monro.

In this setting and ostensibly in reply to Rule's *Vindication* came this anonymous pamphlet now to be considered. The remainder of the writings are little known or read to-day, but this one stands out of the ruck. It has an individuality and a style that makes it distinctive. Its appearance at once aroused strong feelings in friend and foe, and these have persisted down the years. It was hailed among the Episcopalians with delight which was sometimes open and undisguised and sometimes thinly veiled by a defence that although it was obscene and blasphemous in places it was essentially true and had to be published to show the Presbyterians in their true light. Dr. Monro says of the work, "I think I need not caution you to read the discourse I here speak of with a due Regard and Veneration to these sacred things you see thus polluted and profaned."<sup>2</sup> And in another writing, "There was no injury done to the Scotch Presbyterians by the publication of that book. The most blasphemous stories in the book called the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence* can be proved by the best and most undeniable evidence."<sup>3</sup> This opinion is

<sup>1</sup> *A Letter to a Friend*, by Alexander Monro, 1692. Title-Page.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Alexander Monro: *An Apology for the Clergy of Scotland*, Post-Script.

echoed through the years. C. K. Sharpe, in his edition of Kirkton's *History*, published in 1817, says: "The Pamphlet which is written on the plan of L'Estrange's *Dissenters' Sayings*, has gone through a number of editions. It is blameworthy as preserving a multitude of profane expressions uttered by foolish or ignorant presbyterian clergymen, to the scandal of any Church; but that these expressions have been exaggerated as the covenanters pretend, there is no reason to believe; nay, extracts might be made from sermons still extant, both in print and in MS, almost equally gross and abominable with those which disgrace the pages of the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*."<sup>1</sup> And in 1893 J. P. Lawson, writing his *History of the Scottish Episcopal Church*, says: "It is sufficiently clear that whoever was the author or compiler of *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence* the leading Episcopal clergy of Scotland of the time maintained the authenticity of the facts recorded in that extraordinary work."<sup>2</sup>

While these quotations from contemporary and succeeding Episcopalian opinion show the attitude of that party to the work, it aroused on the other side rage and fury. If Lawson calls it a "celebrated" pamphlet the Presbyterians' word for it is "notorious," and the most common epithet applied to it is "scurrilous." Patrick Walker speaks of "that lying, mocking atheist, the author of *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*,"<sup>3</sup> and Dr. Leishman (to take one recent example), in his Preface to *Binning*, says, "that collection of profanity and obscenity entitled *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed*."<sup>4</sup> These quotations from contemporary and subsequent writers show the diversity of opinion on this pamphlet.

It is worth pointing out that, although this work has been so widely known, the references to it repeatedly reveal errors and vagueness. To take a typical example, Henry Grey Graham gives a reference to *Scots Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed* (by R. Calder), Edin., 1697.<sup>5</sup> In this citation there are three doubtful points. (1) This Edinburgh Edition of 1697 is a later reissue, and it would surely be better to cite the original "London 1692." (2) That would involve reverting from the later adaptation of the title, "*Scots Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed*" to the original "*The Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*." (3) To state dogmatically and without qualification that Robert Calder is the author is, according to the information on which this paper is based, an unwarranted assumption. But Graham is not alone in the looseness of his reference. The variety of

<sup>1</sup> Kirkton's *History of the Church of Scotland*. C. K. Sharpe's Edition, 1817, p. 198, Note.

<sup>2</sup> J. P. Lawson: *History of the Scottish Episcopal Church*, p. 163.

<sup>3</sup> *Six Saints of the Covenant*: D. Hay Fleming Edition, 1901, Vol. I, p. 201.

<sup>4</sup> Leishman: *Binning*. Preface xx.

<sup>5</sup> *Social Life of Scotland in 18th Century*, p. 293, Note.

ways in which the Pamphlet is cited even by historians of repute is bewildering. Hew Scott's *Fasti* in reference to Robert Calder says, "He is the reputed author of *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed*, London 1693."<sup>1</sup> Here is another variant of the title and a different date. Many favour the 1693 date including *The Dictionary of National Biography* (in its reference to Robert Calder),<sup>2</sup> Dr. McMillan,<sup>3</sup> Rev. Archibald Stewart,<sup>4</sup> Dr. Malcolm B. Macgregor.<sup>5</sup> Dr. Robert Lee, in *Reform of the Church of Scotland*, refers it to 1719, though he says that it is the 3rd edition.<sup>6</sup> Worst of all, perhaps, Prof. W. G. Blaikie, in his *Preachers of Scotland*, says it "was not published till 1719."<sup>7</sup> The truth is that the original pamphlet was published in 1692 with the title *The Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*. A second edition followed in 1693, and thereafter many editions and reprints have been issued, of which the writer of this paper has seen reference to or actual copies of 1697, 1719, 1738, 1740, 1767, 1790, 1841. It is a small point, but it would, perhaps, be better to give the reference to the original title and date of issue.

### III—AUTHORSHIP.

This brings us to the bigger question of the authorship. The Pamphlet was published anonymously, being signed "Jacob Curate." Who was this Jacob Curate? The writing has been constantly associated with the name of Robert Calder, minister at Nenthorn, "outed" at 1688, who later was minister in Toddrick's Wynd, Edinburgh, and became a well-known Episcopalian pamphleteer. The whole interesting discussion as to whether Calder did write it, and if not who did, must be compressed into as brief a space as possible. Of the writers and historians, including those already quoted, who mention the Pamphlet, one finds that (1) Henry Grey Graham,<sup>8</sup> John Cunningham,<sup>9</sup> Arch. Stewart,<sup>10</sup> Malcolm B. Macgregor<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Fasti*, Vol. II, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> *Dict. Nat. Biog.* (under Robt. Calder).

<sup>3</sup> McMillan: *John Hepburn and the Hebronites*, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> Stewart: *History vindicated in the case of the Wigtown Martyrs*, p. 67.

<sup>5</sup> Macgregor: *The Sources and Literature of Scottish Church History*, p. 83.

<sup>6</sup> Lee: *Reform of the Church of Scotland*, p. 74.

<sup>7</sup> Blaikie: *Preachers of Scotland*, p. 154.

<sup>8</sup> *Social Life in 18th Century*, p. 293, Note.

<sup>9</sup> Cunningham: *History of the Church of Scotland*, Vol. II, p. 226.

<sup>10</sup> Stewart: *Ref. as above* 24.

<sup>11</sup> Macgregor: *Ref. as above* 25.

all state categorically that Robert Calder is the author. (2) Dr. McMillan says "the writer is generally believed to have been Calder."<sup>1</sup> *The Dictionary of National Biography* and Hew Scott's *Fasti* speaking of Robert Calder say "he is the reputed author of *Scots Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed*."<sup>2</sup> J. C. Johnston, in *Treasury of the Scottish Covenant*, says "it is a scurrilous pasquinade ascribed to Curate Calder."<sup>3</sup> (3) There are some who keep cautiously to the anonymity and speak of "the author." These include all the contemporary pamphlets I have read, and others like John Warrick,<sup>4</sup> Dr. Hector McPherson,<sup>5</sup> Dr. Hay Fleming,<sup>6</sup> Dr. Thomas McCrie,<sup>7</sup> Dr. W. G. Blaikie.<sup>8</sup> (4) There are those who accept Kirkton's opinion as expressed in his *History*. This last is an interesting development. In the 1692 Edition of the Pamphlet in New College Library it is written in faded ink on the fly-leaf that the Pamphlet is by Robert Calder. A little slip of paper, however, is pasted in the title-page, in the handwriting of the late Dr. Kennedy, Librarian of New College Library. In the note it is stated, "This pamphlet was not penned by Robert Calder, as is sometimes supposed, but was the joint work of Gilbert Crocket and John Monroe. (See Kirkton's *Church History*, p. 194.)" It seems then that Dr. Kennedy had considered the question of the authorship and had come so definitely to the conclusion that it was not by Robert Calder, but by these two men mentioned by Kirkton, that he inserted this note in the 1692 copy of the Pamphlet and inserted a similar note in the *Dictionary of Anonymous Literature* (Halkett and Laing), although he adds there that later edition may have been issued by Robert Calder. Furthermore, as a result of this decision, the Pamphlet is set forth in the Catalogue of New College Library as "*Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*—the joint interpretation of Gilbert Crocket and John Monroe, London, 1692."

Thus there are four conclusions on this point—those who say Robert Calder wrote it, those who say he is supposed to have written it, those who do not attempt to pierce the veil of anonymity; and those who attribute it to Gilbert Crockett and John Monroe. With regard to the last of these if we go back to the reference given by Dr. Kennedy in Kirkton's *History* we find the exact words to be, "and lastly if you would know what

<sup>1</sup> McMillan : *John Hepburn and the Hebronites*, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Dict. Nat. Biog.* and Hew Scott's *Fasti* on "Robert Calder."

<sup>3</sup> Johnston : *Treasury of the Scottish Covenant*, p. 413.

<sup>4</sup> Warrick : *Moderators of Church of Scotland, 1690-1740*, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> McPherson : *Alexander Shields*, p. 238.

<sup>6</sup> Notes to Patrick Walker, *Six Saints of the Covenant*, Vol. II, p. 201.

<sup>7</sup> McCrie : *Miscellaneous Writings*, Vol. II.

<sup>8</sup> Blaikie : *Preachers of Scotland*, p. 154.

integrity of spirit was among them (the Scottish Curates) consider their last work, the sting in their tail, the Presbyterian Eloquence. The authors are said to be Mr. Gilbert Crocket and Mr. John Monroe, confessors for the Scotch bishops and pensioners to the English."<sup>1</sup>

Thus Dr. Kennedy is satisfied that Robert Calder was not the author, but that these two men were. It may have been that he had other information, but if so he does not mention his source. The one reference he gives is this quotation from Kirkton. It is certainly impressive as being a contemporary verdict, but it is not a dogmatic statement of fact that Kirkton makes. "Said to have been" are his exact words. Is this a sufficient basis to establish the claim of these two men? Mr. J. H. Millar, in his *Scottish Prose of the 17th and 18th Centuries*, also attributes the Pamphlet to these two.<sup>2</sup> But Gilbert Crocket and John Monroe are only names. There is no reference to them elsewhere at the time. They are not mentioned in the *Fasti* as having held charges in Scotland.<sup>3</sup> There is a pencilled note on the Title Page of the 1693 edition of the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence* in New College Library again in Dr. Kennedy's handwriting which says that Gilbert Crocket was rector of Crayford. Why should these two unknown men, one of whom was possibly an Englishman, be associated with the controversial writing dealing so closely with the contemporary Scottish scene, especially when there were so many redoubtable wielders of the pen already in the lists on the side of Episcopacy?

With regard to the claim that Robert Calder was the author certain arguments might be stated against such a theory. (1) No contemporary writer mentions him as author. Indeed it is striking how friend and opponent alike cling to the anonymity of the writer. (2) Kirkton suggests different men as authors. (3) Robert Calder's numerous writings are confined to a period beginning much later. No other printed work of his is earlier than 1701, and they fall mostly into the period 1703-1717 when a fresh controversy broke out between Presbyterian and Episcopalian on the proposed introduction of the English Prayer Book. (4) Arising out of this there is the duel between Calder and John Anderson of Dumbarton culminating in Anderson's furious assault entitled *Curate Calder Whipt*. In this attack he gathers up everything attributed to Calder and assails him for them. He would most certainly have mentioned this pamphlet if Calder had been known to be the author of it. It is interesting that in the Pamphlet, *Curate Calder Whipt*, he does mention *Scotch Presbyterian*

<sup>1</sup> Kirkton: *History of the Church of Scotland*, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> *Scottish Prose of 17th and 18th Centuries*, 1912, p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> A John Munro is said in Scott's *Fasti*, Vol. IV, p. 320, to be "one of the authors of S.P.E." He was minister of the East Church, Stirling, from 1679 to 1693.

*Eloquence*. "Thou hast, by the by, mentioned the *Presbyterian Eloquence*. Everybody knows that book to be a forgery out of the Curate's shop."<sup>1</sup> A little later he gives "a taste of the Book entituled *The Lawfulness and Expediency of Set Forms*: The author of this book was een the worthy Curat Calder. He published it in the year 1706. It is his principal piece and that by which he hath made his proselytes."<sup>2</sup> Thus Anderson does not name Calder as author of *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*, and he mentions another pamphlet unknown in comparison as his *principal piece*. Surely if he had known Calder was the author of the notorious *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence* he would have included that in his diatribe. Wodrow, recording the death of John Anderson, spoke of his papers against Caddel (Calder) as "a little unsuited to his gravity though it may be as he said to me, 'this is the only way to silence Caddel.'"<sup>3</sup> He would hardly have kept silence about this crowning offence if he had known Calder to be the author. And if Anderson did not associate Calder with the writing who was the first to do it? (5) Calder, himself, in his writings makes no claim to the authorship of the writing.

It may be asked then how did the association arise? It may have been because of the signature. "Jacob Curate" became linked with "Curate" Calder who wrote in the same vein as the 1692 pamphlet ridiculing the Presbyterians. Further, it is true that in later editions of the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence* amongst other accretions tacked on to the original were some of Calder's acknowledged writings. It may even have been that Calder reissued the original pamphlet with additions by himself and others. But with regard to the 1692 pamphlet it is an extremely questionable assumption to say that Robert Calder wrote it.

Summing up this discussion of the various theories of authorship, it may be held that Robert Calder cannot be stated with any confidence to be the author, and such confident assumption by historians and writers should be challenged. On the other hand, on the basis of the Kirkton reference it may be attributed to these little known men, Crocket and Monroe. Perhaps they are safest who put no name to it at all and continue to speak of the anonymous author or authors. For the writer of this paper a significant statement is to be found in Lawson's *History*: "After the Revolution, among the individuals who had smarted for their religious opinion were Dr. Monro, Principal of the University of Edinburgh; Dr. John Strachan, Professor of Divinity; Mr. Massie, regent in the College, all of whom had been deprived of their respective situations. Incensed by

<sup>1</sup> *Curat Calder Whipt*, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Wodrow: *Correspondence*, Vol. I, p. 31.



this treatment they received, it was rumoured that in conjunction with the Rev. Mr. Canaries, and, as some assert, Mr. Robert Calder, . . . they resolved to act upon the offensive by producing a work the object of which was to hold up the Presbyterian Divines to the ridicule of the world. Whether there was any real foundation for this alleged combination cannot be satisfactorily ascertained, but it is sufficient to say that Ridpath and other Presbyterian writers firmly believed that at least some of the before named persons were the veritable authors of the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*.<sup>1</sup> This suggests that there was a joint authorship. It was not the work of one man. Possibly there were several contributors. The style of the writing supports this being a compilation loosely put together of quotations from writers like Shields, Rule and Rutherford and a mass of hearsay anecdotes. There may have been one or two editors or compilers to gather up and issue these as a co-ordinated whole. There we must leave the discussion of authorship meantime.

#### IV—EDITIONS AND FORMAT.

As has already been stated the pamphlet appeared originally in 1692, a second edition in 1693, and thereafter many editions have been issued. The Title Page read: "*The Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence; or the Foolishness of their Teaching Discovered from their Books, Sermons and Prayers; and some remarks on Mr. Rule's late Vindication of the Kirk.*" London. Printed for Randal Taylor, near Stationer's Hall, 1692. Two quotations appeared on the Title Page—one from Baxter's *Cure of Church Divisions*, Direct .X, and the other (ironically) from Rutherford's Epistle 2 *To his Parishioners*. There is a dedication to E. C. (the Earl of Crawford) signed "Jacob Curate." The body of the pamphlet comprising 116 pages is divided roughly into four sections.

The second edition appeared in 1693 also printed in London for Randal Taylor. This is the edition so often quoted as the original. It is the same pamphlet word for word as the 1692 except for a slight difference in wording in the last two paragraphs of the *Dedication*. The body of the Pamphlet is identical with 1692. The Title Page is the same except for the words, "*The Second Edition, with Additions.*" These additions comprise a *Postscript* to the *Dedication* entitled *P.S. To the Reader*, and a *Post Script* to the Pamphlet in the form of a supposed letter to the author enclosing "a few more notes of the Sermons and Prayers which I remembered upon reading those that are printed." The whole pamphlet is now included in 104 pages.

<sup>1</sup> Lawson: *History of the Scottish Episcopal Church*, pp. 157-158.

This practice, begun in the 1693 edition, of including additions by various writers is continued and developed in succeeding editions. Most of these begin with the 1693 edition as basis and include varying addenda. A reprint in 1738, for example, contains the 1693 edition with considerable additions comprising "*Notes of the Sermons of Mr. John Wyllie, Minister of the Gospel at Clackmannan; On the death of Mr. J. W.*" (verse); Extract of a poem entitled "*The History of Jonah in Zion's Flowers,*" by Mr. Zachary Boyd, minister of the Baronie of Glasgow; notes of the Sermons of Mr. J—n D—n, and others; excerpts from the writings of Mr. Robert Calder; *Coat of Arms of Sir John Presbyter*; *The Fanatical Diascordium*; *a Short Catechism for the Instruction of Young and Old* (Robert Calder's Work); *Ministerial Bon-mots*. All these, it will be seen, are accretions to the original body of the pamphlet. The Title-Page of his 1738 reprint is changed from that of 1692 and 1693. It now reads, as so often quoted, "*Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence Display'd; or the Folly of their Teaching discover'd from their Books, Sermons and Prayers; and some Remarks on Mr. Rule's late Vindication of the Kirks interspersed with some genuine adventures in Love, etc.*" The quotations from Baxter and Rutherford are missing; There is a Frontispiece portraying a Presbyterian Preacher "holding forth"<sup>1</sup> with the Devil sitting grinning in the gallery. Under it is a quotation from *Hudibras*, "For his religion it was fit, To match his learning and his wit. 'Twas Presbyterian true-blue," etc. Another copy of this same reprint has a Frontispiece portraying a figure of which one half is a Presbyterian Preacher in a pulpit and the other half is a gesticulating figure standing on a tub. These reprints may have been of the 1697 Edinburgh edition.

An interesting edition is one to be found in the New College Library bound up with Dr. Archibald Pitcairn's *The Assembly* which is in the same vein of writing and deals with the same people mentioned in *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*. This is called the Fourth edition published in 1766. It is the 1693 edition over again with a variation in the Title Page and the inclusion of some additions. The Title now reads, *Scots Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed*; or "The Manner of their Teaching and Preaching exposed. From a variety of authentic Extracts collected from their Books, Sermons, Prayers, Letters, etc. Interspersed with some genuine and curious adventures on different occasions." The quotation follows: "*Tolluntur in altum ut lapsu graviore ruant.*" The Fourth Edition, carefully corrected, with large additions. London, MDCCLXVI. The Addenda comprise, *A Modern Tale of Yesterday* (verse); verse on "*the horrid murder committed on the sacred person of the most reverend*

<sup>1</sup> The phrase used throughout the Pamphlet instead of "preach."

*Father in God, James, late Lord Archbishop of St. Andrews, Primate of Scotland, etc., etc., May 3, 1697; Coat of Arms of Sir John Presbyter.*

There is, however, another edition printed in 1732 which is set forth as "the Fourth Edition," and it is interesting in that it is simply a Reprint of the 1692 original, without any additions, not even those of 1693.

These various editions and reprints mentioned out of the large number published will suffice to show the great variety of documents and nomenclature that has grown up in connection with the pamphlet. At the core is the original writing of 1692, but with the passage of years it seems that the opportunity was taken to issue and reissue this with varied additions all for the purpose of ridiculing the Presbyterians. It is the purpose of this Paper to study the original pamphlet rather than these later developments. The quotations made are from the pages numbered as in the 1692 edition. With regard to the body of the text it is unaltered in succeeding editions. Nothing is added or omitted except for the change of wording already noted at the end of the *Dedication*. Some later editions do indeed divide up the subject matter under Chapters and Headings; correct certain glaring blunders like "Abraham out of Judea" (p. 110) to "out of Chaldea"; and make some attempt to correct the spelling. The spelling, especially of names and towns and persons, is deplorable. Examples can be given such as Mr. Areskine (for Erskine), Galloshiells (for Galashiels), Parish of Tindrum in the South-West (Twynholm or Tynron), Leswade (for Lasswade), Inverask (for Inveresk), Vetch (for Veitch), John Simple (for John Semple), and many more. What is even more strange is that in transmitting names in quotation, as in the quotations from Rutherford's *Letters*<sup>1</sup> it is contrived to render the most curious misspelling of names. Hugh McKail becomes McKel, Carletoun becomes Earltown, Kennedy becomes Keanedy, Fergushill becomes Fergusson, etc. This recalls an interesting comment by Thomas McCrie on the spelling of Claverhouse. He says that Scott made him speak elegant English, but gives an extract from one of Claverhouse's letters to demonstrate his spelling which is very bad and singularly reminiscent of the spelling of the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*. McCrie says not one of the Presbyterian ministers whom Claverhouse persecuted and Scott has ridiculed could have perpetrated such barbarisms.<sup>2</sup> This is perhaps a justifiable comment also on the pamphlet which attacks others for ignorance and stupidity of utterance and writing.

<sup>1</sup> *Joshua Redivivus*, Ninth Edition, Glasgow, 1765.

<sup>2</sup> T. McCrie: Review of Tales of my Landlord, *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. II, pp. 310-311, Note.

## V—THE PAMPHLET.

It is difficult to know how much knowledge of the contents to assume. To analyse thoroughly and give a resumé of the contents of 100 pages is impossible in the limits of this paper. Some attempt must be made to give some of the features, arguments and illustrations, though few quotations can be given. It will be assumed that this Paper is read in conjunction with a copy of the Pamphlet. The pages quoted are in the 1692 original.

The two quotations on the Title Page give a clue to the style of the writing to be found in the Pamphlet. That from Baxter begins, "It grieveth my soul to think what Pitiful, Raw and Ignorant Preaching is crowded most after, merely for the loudness of the Preacher's voice, etc." That from Rutherford reads (the reverse of its original implication), "Follow not the Pastors of this land, for the Sun is gone down upon them, as the Lord liveth, they lead you from Christ and the good old way." Then follows the mocking *Dedication* to the Earl of Crawford. As the Kingdom had no Chancellor the Earl of Crawford was appointed to preside in the Parliament of 1689. Cunningham says of him, "He was a staunch Presbyterian and a well-meaning man, but his piety and fanaticism made him the butt of the keenest satire of the Prelatists."<sup>1</sup> The *Dedication* addressed him as "so unwearied a hearer of these wonderful preachers of whom I now treat, and constant and close in the study of those extraordinary books cited in this Pamphlet. . . . Your Lordship knows well it is impossible for the ablest Curates or Prelates amongst them all to imitate the precious, powerful, soul-ravishing, Heart-searching Eloquence of these sons of Thunder—Kirkton, Rule, Shields, Areskine, Dickson, Chreighton, etc." The *Dedication* goes on in this vein including much raillery and some very unpleasant insinuations on the Earl's moral character; and begs him "to take the following Flowers of Presbyterian Eloquence unto your Protection." Then follows the conclusion, which is the one emendation of the 1693 text on the 1692. (The 1693 edition is quoted here.) "To whom should I rather dedicate this incomprehensible Rhapsody of Human Eloquence, this Treasury of Holy Aphorism and Sententious Raptures than to . . . your learned self my Lord, and I beseech you to accept of the present (which I hope shall not be the last neither) as a tribute from the hand of your Lordship's most obedient and most obliged servant, Jacob Curate." From this *Dedication* it will be seen the tone in which the whole Pamphlet is written—mocking raillery with frequent lapses into bad taste and indecency and with sudden flashes of bitterness which Ridpath called "inveterate malice."<sup>2</sup> In all fairness,

<sup>1</sup> Cunningham: *Church History of Scotland*, Vol. II, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> G. Ridpath: *Answer to S.P.E. Dedication*.

however, over against this should be set Ridpath's own *Dedication* to Bishop Paterson in his *Answer to the Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*, in which he matches and, many will think surpasses his opponents with their own weapons.

Before dealing with the body of the pamphlet of 1692, reference may be made to the additions. The *Post-Script* in 1693 is simply a further collection of stories to ridicule Presbyterian ministers. The *Post-Script to the Dedication* is an ironic admonition to the Reader in perusing the work which is an exposure of "the Gallimaufry of Enthusiastick Zeal, Fun and Nonsense of the Presbyterian Preachers," not "to laugh where he should cry." With regard to the additions in later editions they are of the same type, stories, verses, quotations and rumours of the Presbyterians. None of these are very clever, much the best being the contributions of Robert Calder. In one edition there is anonymously included a work of his elsewhere published separately called *A Short Catechism for the Instruction of Young and Old*.<sup>1</sup> Examples of his wit are:—"Question: Is the Presbyterian Kirk a Christian Kirk? Answer: If a scriptureless, Lord's prayerless, creedless, sacramentless, altarless, reasonless, fatherless, absolutionless Kirk be a Christian Kirk, it is the most Christian Kirk in the world. Question: What do the Presbyterians think of Government in Heaven? Answer: They think it too prelatival, for the word Archangel sounds like Archbishop; and they wonder that the Angels made not a Covenant against the Archangels in Heaven, as the Presbyterians made upon the Archbishops on earth."

The matter of the Pamphlet has been divided into four sections as follows:—"Section I, The true character of the Presbyterian Pastors and People in Scotland. Section II, Containing some expressions out of their printed Books. Section III, Containing Notes of the Presbyterian Sermons taken in writing from the mouth. Section IV, Containing some few Expressions of the Presbyterian prayers." These four Sections are subdivided in later editions into Chapters. These divisions, however, do not greatly matter. There is no argument, no climax of reasoning, but a collection of quotations and sayings strung together. All these have the object of holding up to ridicule the Presbyterian clergy and laity. Attacks are made on certain individuals, and a glance may be taken at that feature of the Pamphlet.

James Kirkton is repeatedly mentioned and never without something derogatory being said of him. He is called "the everlasting comedian of the party" (p. 20), and to him are attributed the most wild and ludicrous statements most of which are unsubstantiated by any other proof than

<sup>1</sup> Bound up with A. Pitcairn's *Assembly* in Volume of Pamphlets in New College Library.

hearsay. We have already quoted Kirkton's reference to the Pamphlet in his *History* (p. 194). This History of Kirkton was re-edited in 1817 by Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe. McCrie<sup>1</sup> says the work was done in the plan of Voltaire's editions of Pascal's *Thoughts* being intended to throw discredit on the statements and ridicule on the sentiments of the author in the form of notes. In a biographical preface Sharpe says of Kirkton, "Of all the abusive pamphlets that assailed him Kirkton seems to have been chiefly enraged by a scurrilous work entitled *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed* which appeared very soon after the Revolution. This he mentions in his history. The author inveighs against him not only for his wrongful appropriation of the year's stipend at Merton, but for his ridiculous manner of preaching and foolish doctrine."<sup>2</sup> Thus in addition to being pilloried for his manner of preaching, this charge is brought against him of holding two livings in the Church, at Merton and in Edinburgh. There is no space here to examine this charge in detail. It does seem that for a year he did do this, but subsequently adjusted the matter. This, however, gave this pamphleteer a great opportunity to quote this instance as showing that Plurality of Benefices was rampant in the Church of Scotland (p. 30).

## VI

The outstanding example of personal attack, however, is that made on Principal Gilbert Rule. Rule was the great protagonist of the Presbyterian cause and, in a series of pamphlets, strove with the Episcopalians. He was appointed by the General Assembly to write officially in defence of the Church and published his First and Second *Vindications*, as well as entering into controversy with Bishop John Sage on the rival merits of Presbyterian and Episcopalian Church Government. There are two sides to the fierce attack made on Rule in the pamphlet. There is a personal abuse of him; and there is an attack on the position he attempted to set forth as representing the outlook of the majority of the Presbyterians. With regard to the first there are remarks scattered throughout such as, "Mr. Rule, the great scribe of the Party" (p. 60); "Mr. Rule who calls himself a Doctor of Medicine (for they never pretend to have any in Divinity)" (p. 71); "This is a terrible man indeed who can kill both soul and body" (p. 86). These two jibes are inspired by the fact that Rule was qualified in Medicine and had practised as a Doctor.

More important is the attempt to answer Rule's setting out of the

<sup>1</sup> McCrie: *Misc. Writings*, Vol. II, p. 250.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to Sharpe's edition of *Kirkton's History*, 1817, 8.

Presbyterian position. In the Title Page of the Pamphlet it is said that it is partly an answer to Mr. Rule's *Vindication of the Kirk*. There are many quotations from the *Second Vindication*, and it is observed "that Mr. Rule answers our Books so thoroughly that he imputes to the authors as a fault every little escape of the printer's about wrong numbering of the pages" (p. 87). That which Rule was commissioned to do was to set out a case for the Established Church in opposition to Episcopacy without assuming the radical and extreme position of the Cameronians and others. It is interesting to see his attempt to do this and to hold a *via media* between these two positions. His effort is to disavow the extremists and to set forth the viewpoint of the "sober" Presbyterians. The reply of the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence* is to refuse to allow a difference between Presbyterians. "I leave the world to judge by the way of defending the Party, what their cause must be and to determine whether he who calls himself a sober Presbyterian and says that he was selected and appointed by the sober General Assembly to write in their Defence be not indeed as black and foul-mouthed as the most rank and rigid Cameronian among them all. For my part I can see no difference betwixt his style and theirs, except this may be one that Mr. Rule seems to have learnt his stile from the coal-stealers in Edinburgh, or at Buch-Haven, of which College only he ought to have been Principal; whereas the Cameronians seemed to have learned their stile from the Shepherds and Herring Fishers on the Western Coast, who if they have more cant, yet they have less knavery than the former" (p. 75).

This quotation shows not only the personalities indulged in by the Pamphlet, but also its attitude on this question. Rule's distinction between "sober" and extreme Presbyterians is not to be allowed. On the question of the Rabbling of the Curates, for example, which was the great grievance reiterated in pamphlet after pamphlet by the dispossessed clergy, Rule had pointed out that this had been done mostly by Cameronians rendered mad by oppression. This too is denied in *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*. Repeatedly the sayings and doings of Cameronians and extremists are quoted as the attitude of all Presbyterians. Eight quotations are given from a Pamphlet entitled, "*A Brief and True Account of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland since the year 1660*," to represent the Presbyterian point of view. But Rule had made mention of this very work in his *Second Vindication* saying of it, "All the assertions and severity of the stile in that Book are imputed to the Presbyterians. This is unfair and injurious and false imputation. Presbyterians disown both the stile and many principles vented in that book; it was written by a Cameronian while that Party stood at a distance from the sober Presbyterians and from the Generality of them who bear that name, as much as from Prelatists."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gilbert Rule: *Second Vindication of the Church of Scotland*, 1691, pp. 112-113.

Again, 33 quotations are made from "*The Hind let loose*," and are set forth as the opinions held by all Presbyterians. This work was by one whom his biographer calls "the Cameronian Philosopher Alexander Shields."<sup>1</sup> He is quoted as a Minister of the Church of Scotland, which is quite true for he was admitted after the Revolution, but this work was the product of time when he was a critic of that Church and does not represent its views. A whole section—pp. 49-60—is given over to quotations under the remark, "Notes out of the Hind Let Loose, printed 1687, which Book is the great Oracle and Idol of the true Covenanters." The quotations include such as that of p. 96, "The Covenant is our Magna Charta of Religion and Righteousness, our greatest security for all our interests," which all Presbyterians would accept. But it goes on to adduce quotations to justify "the righteous judgment on Archbishop Sharpe," which was not universally applauded by the Presbyterians. Then excerpts are quoted from sections of the Work which set out the extreme Covenanting position with regard to the renouncing of the Stewarts and right to take up arms against Tyrants. From p. 311 of the work is quoted a reference to the excommunication of the Stewarts. "As he is not, nor will be our covenanted and sworn King, and therefore we cannot be his covenanted and sworn subjects, so he is not nor can be our crowned King, and therefore we cannot be his liege-subjects owing fealty and obedience to him." This is a reference to James VII and is the language of the Sanquhar Declaration, which again was a minority movement of the Presbyterians. From the section, "Concerning unlawful imposed Oaths" is quoted p. 1466: "James the Papist—James the Tyrant, we cannot pray for him as Christian or as a King because he is neither." Many other of these quotations might be made from Sections of the Work like that vindicating the Bearing of Defensive Arms and the support of extraordinary Execution of Judgment by Private men (p. 658). Refusal to pay Taxation vindicated (pp. 701,712). These can hardly be said to be the tenets of more than a section of the Presbyterians, but the pamphlet fathers them on all Presbyterians.

In another place Rule's division is admitted, but further quotations are made from *The Hind Let Loose* to prove that those who held the opinions of the writing were "indeed the truest Scotch Presbyterians" (p. 60). Passages are quoted of where the more extreme Presbyterians attack the more moderate. Shields' scornful remarks on those who accepted the Toleration are quoted. "Those who embraced it acted contrary to the Presbyterian principles of the Church of Scotland . . . and contrary to the Covenants." "His arguments on the Head," says the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence* writer with his tongue in his cheek, "are infinitely

<sup>1</sup> Title of Hector Macpherson's biography of Alexander Shields.



beyond any that we have heard from Mr. Rule " (p. 60). " Now the Presbyterians who accepted the Toleration and made such a bustling address of Thanks to King James for it, are they whom Mr. Rule calls the sober Presbyterians. And now I leave him to vindicate himself and them for what is thus charged upon them by one who is well-known to be a true Presbyterian and as such is at present employed in a considerable trust by the General Assembly " (p. 65). Shields had, of course, by this time been received back into the Church of Scotland and was Chaplain to the Earl of Angus's regiment.<sup>1</sup> The pamphlet is here, not without cleverness, playing off Presbyterian against Presbyterian to discredit them all. And so a triumphant conclusion is reached. " If we may believe the account the Presbyterians of Scotland have published to the world themselves, then the one half of our Presbyterians are neither moderate nor sober, but wild Hill-men, Separatists, a robbing, lawless, ungovernable Rabble, a mad People, that is, in a word, they are Cameronians, vide First and Second Vindications and Further Vindication of the Church of Scotland. The other half are Betrayers of all religion, Covenant-Breakers, worldly, fawning, flattering Court-Parasites, blasphemous, unfaithful, time-serving Ministers and the greatest plagues of the Church of Scotland ; vide ' The Hind Let Loose,' ' Banders Disbanded ' " (pp. 65-66). This part of the Pamphlet has been set forth because it is the part which anchors it to the decade 1690-1700. Much of this must have little meaning for later reissuers of the Pamphlet who simply desired quips against the Presbyterians, but it is revealing to the student of the period as showing, through the scorn poured on it by this Pamphlet, the effort made by the newly established Presbyterian Church to hold its own position somewhere between the extremes of Episcopacy and Cameronianism.

## VII

There are only two other sections in the Pamphlet with quotations that are verifiable. One is a selection (pp. 89-95) from the *Letters* of Samuel Rutherford. Rutherford, with his own peculiar rhapsodic style of writing, was an inevitable target for the Pamphlet. Even his greatest admirers would admit that his writing is sometimes over-luscious and cloying, and his images and metaphors strained to embarrassing lengths, as for example, his favourite metaphor of the Church as the Bride of Christ. On p. 23 the Pamphlet says, " When they speak of Christ they

<sup>1</sup> The Earl of Angus's Regiment is still known as " The Cameronians " and forms the 1st Batt. of the Scottish Rifles.

represent him as a Gallant, courting and kissing, by their fulsome, amorous discourses on the mysterious Parables of the Canticles." This may be another reference to Rutherford. There are some 59 quotations made from the *Letters*. Checking these from the 1765 edition of "*Joshua Redivivus*" it would appear that this section of the Pamphlet has not been done with any great care or precision. There are frequent mistakes, sometimes altering the sense, but exhibiting careless transcription rather than deliberate perversion. In Epistle 11 "lack my black mouth" should read "lay my black mouth" (p. 90). In the same Epistle "Bud nor Hire" should be "Sudd nor Hire" (p. 90). Epistle 15, "broken bones" in the original is "broken brows" (p. 90). Epistle 41, "snattering and swimming" should be read "swattering" (p. 92). Epistle 214 (quoted on p. 94) "stalls of Antichrist's filthy nest" should read "sticks of, etc." Epistle 92 (quoted p. 93), "dawted Davie" should be the reading instead of "dated Davie." The last 17 quotations are all referred to the wrong letter, one in advance of what it should be. Others such as Epistle 27 (quoted p. 91) should be Epistle 22. Further errors might be noted, but these will suffice to show a certain carelessness in quotations. The words quoted are there in the *Letters*, but often some words of one sentence are tacked on to half a sentence in another paragraph with no real connection and no continuity of thought. They are not very damaging quotations, often being dull and pointless. One feels that from Rutherford's *Letters* a malicious enemy should have produced more deadly stuff than is here given. It is one of the least effective parts of the Pamphlet and seems to have been carelessly done by one who was not particularly well versed in the Scots dialect which Rutherford used.

On pages 41-49 there are quotations given from the sermons of Presbyterian Preachers of whom, on p. 41, it is said, "the best of their preachers were singled out to hold forth to the Parliament." "Three of the choicest of these by Williamson, Rule and Spalding" are quoted, "wherein they extol Presbyterian Government with all the glorious epithets due to the Gospel and the Presbyterian Church, viz., Christ's Bride, his Virgin, his Spouse, his Glory, his precious Remnant, his glorious Elect, etc., etc." "And they will soon prove that the High Priesthood of Aaron, among the Jews, was a type of Presbyterian Democracy in the Church" (p. 42). From a sermon of Spalding a quotation like this is given: "Ye members of Parliament, what shall ye say when ye shall be cited at the Great Assize before the Tribunal of Christ, to that Question, 'What Justice or Vote gave ye me in my afflicted Church? In the first Parliament of King William and Queen Mary in Scotland, was ye for me or against me?'" (Spalding's Sermon before Parliament on I Chron. xii, 32, quoted on p. 43). And from a sermon by Gilbert Rule on Isaiah ii, 2 "(for their texts are generally

from the obscurest places of the Old Testament),” “Rule takes it for granted this mountain of the Lord’s House there spoke of, is expressly meant of Scotch Presbytery, which he says is terrible as an army with Banners. This last, I confess, has often been found true in a literal sense” (p. 43).

These then are the quotations from Printed Books and Sermons which can be checked and verified. The remainder of the Pamphlet claims to be expressions and sayings from Sermons and Writings of the Presbyterians of which there is no means of verification. This large part of the Pamphlet is that which has been added to in the succeeding editions much in the fashion of Post-Script to the 1693 Edition which purported to be a letter from one who had read the 1692 Pamphlet and desired to add a few more stories from his own collection. These stories are quite unreliable often being attributed, as on p. 6, where “a Gentleman of good Reputation and Credit” is reported telling a story that is disreputable and discreditable. George Ridpath, in the Preface to his *Answer to the Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*, says furiously, “we abhor their method of inventing lies, new vamping old stories fathered upon Quakers and Antinomians and charging them afresh upon us . . . sending about the country to pump drunken, debauched fellows for stories against the Presbyterians, as is known our antagonists did, and then advance them for truths” (p. viii). Against this stricture can be set Dr. Alexander Monro’s assertion in the Postscript to his tract, *An Apology for the Clergy in Scotland*. “There was no injury done to the Scotch Presbyterians by the publication of that work. The most blasphemous stories in the book can be proved by the best and most undeniable evidence.”<sup>1</sup> And Lawson in his *History* says, “the leading Episcopal clergy of Scotland of that time maintained the authenticity of the facts recorded in that extraordinary work.”<sup>2</sup> Monro at least admits that some of the stories are blasphemous which are fathered upon the Presbyterians.

Apart from the charge of lies and forgery McCrie, in his *Review of the Tales of my Landlord*, has an interesting discussion on the question of the unreliability of sayings and sermons ascribed to the Covenanting preachers. “Few of these sermons were printed during the lifetime of the preachers or from notes written by themselves. They are usually notes taken by hearers and as such very imperfect and inaccurate.” McCrie says he has before him two sermons by Mr. Welsh printed at different times, and upon reading them no person could suppose that they were preached by the same individual. “It was natural though injudicious in well-meaning people after the Revolution to publish whatever came their

<sup>1</sup> A. Monro: *Apology for the Clergy in Scotland*; Post-Script, pp. 91-92.

<sup>2</sup> Lawson: *History of the Episcopal Church of Scotland*, p. 163.

way purporting to have been preached or spoken by men whom they revered so highly. We do not deny that some of the field preachers indulged in a style too familiar and colloquial, and were apt to employ phrases and comparisons which suggest ideas that are degrading. But we maintain that the fault was not peculiar to them or to the Presbyterian Church."<sup>1</sup> One can wish that those who replied to the Pamphlet had more often taken a line like this last admitting certain faults in speech and simile, explaining their genesis in the stress of the times in which these men preached and their use of simple things of nature not so easily understood in ages more superficially refined and elegant. And, of course, the fact which McCrie points out that this language and imagery was not the perquisite of one Church, but was common to the times.

### VIII

Some impression must now be given of this large section of the Pamphlet. Few quotations can be given in the confines of this paper and the Pamphlet should be read in conjunction with these remarks and references. Some parts of it also do not bear repetition, and to get a complete picture of the Pamphlet the whole should be read.

There is no clear agreement in the Pamphlet. It sets out in the beginning to give the true character of the Presbyterian Pastors and People. These are in a series of disconnected anecdotes and quotations and arguments including those already dealt with in this Paper. We might look for a minute at the picture given of the Presbyterian Laity. This picture is not at all consistent. Sometimes the people are spoken of as strong-minded, resolute and opinionated. "They are truly the Guides and the Pastors must follow them whom they pretend to conduct (p. 2). Asked to repeat Lord's Prayer, Creed and Ten Commandments they replied that they were above these childish ordinances (p. 4). They pray extempore and lecture in their families upon the most mysterious chapters of Ezekiel, Daniel or Revelation (p. 4)." But more often the people are represented as the opposite to this, ignorant, superstitious and deluded. The Presbyterian method of the democratic election of ministers is attacked—"the calling and constituting of ministers is in the power of the Mob . . . they will chuse none but will indulge them in their mad humour" (p. 2). There are numerous references to "the simple multitude (that measure Religion by the Sound and not the Sense) so easily deluded" (p. 1); "the poor people locked up in the cell of Ignorance" (p. 4); "the animal spirits of the Presbyterian rabble affected by a

<sup>1</sup> T. McCrie: *Misc. Writings*, Vol. II, p. 373.

loud voice and whining tone ” (p. 7). More specifically they are charged with (1) *Superstition*. The oft-quoted instance is given of the poor Presbyterian woman who asked if Bishops were shapen like other men “ because our preachers made us believe the Bishops were all cloven-footed, that they lost 500 merks Scots for every witch burned in their dioceses, and that they have *no shadows* ” (p. 10). (2) *Bigotry* “They are more concerned at the reading of the speeches of their Covenant martyrs that died for Rebellion and Murder than to reading the martyrdom of St. Stephen” (p. 7). “Baptism by Curates is the mark of the Beasts, and the hearing of them as unlawful as fornication or adultery” (p. 8). “A young woman reading in St. Peter, Christ the Bishop of our souls, blotted out Bishop and inserted ‘Presbyterian’ of our souls ” (p. 9), and another “ who tore out everywhere in her Bible the word Lord because it was polluted by being applied to the profane Prelates ” (p. 9). (3) *Antinomianism*. “They call Peace, Love, Charity and Justice not Gospel, but dry morality only ” (p. 3). “ They never scruple before a Judge any perjury that may seem to advance the Cause ; and they stand in their ordinary dealings to cheat for a penny, nay murder itself becomes a Virtue when the Work of the Covenant seems to require it ” (p. 3). *Immorality*. “Generally their Conventicles produced very many Bastards, and the excuses they made for that was, ‘Where sin abounds the Grace of God superabounds. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ. The Lambs of Christ may sport together. To the pure all things are pure, nay, generally, they are of opinion that a man is never a true saint till he have a sound fall, such as David’s with Bathsheba ’ ” (p. 5). *Delusions*. “A Person that hath a dexterity of whining may make a great congregation of them weep with an Ode of Horace or Eclogue of Virgil, especially if he can but drivel a little at the mouth or eyes when he repeats them ” (p. 7). “ What greater instance of Delusion is there than that seven or eight thousand people should be raised to Rebellion at Bothwell Bridge by sermons assuring them that the very Windle-straws, the Grass in the Field and the Stars in Heaven would fight for them? ” (p. 9). “ The only men (of the Presbyterians) that suffered anything being the poor silly Plowmen and Shepherds in the West, whom the false Teachers hounded out to die for a broken Covenant ” (p. 33).

Such is the picture drawn of the Presbyterian laity. It is not consistent there being the two strands, one portraying a strong bigoted people guiding their ministers, the other a poor deluded superstitious people imposed on by the Preachers. George Ridpath’s *Answer* should be read for a reply to many of these points, e.g., his reply to the charge of antinomianism on p. 63 of his *Answer*. Again on p. 34 of his *Answer* he points out a glaring inconsistency in two succeeding paragraphs : “ the

Presbyterian Preachers are only flocked after by such a herd." In next paragraph, "hence it is that the People generally forsake and abhor them and nothing but a few of the rabble frequent their best Churches and Preachers" (p. 39).<sup>1</sup> The general picture that is conveyed, however, is that the followers of Presbytery are a "Rabble" of the lower orders and the ignorant. For an answer to this see McCrie (Vol. II, *Misc. Writings*, 372).

## IX

From the Presbyterian laity we turn to the ministers. "I come now to give you a true Character of their Preachers, and truly, to be plain, they are a proud, sour, incontrovertible tribe, looking perfectly like the Pharisees, having faces like their horrid decree of Reprobation. They are without Humanity, void of common Civility, as well as Catholick Charity" (p. 12). One can pass for a Soul-Ravishing Spiritualist, if he can but set off his nonsense with a wry mouth, which with them is called a Grace-pouring down Countenance" (p. 7). "They have their souls cast into a different mould from all Christians in the world" (p. 13). The following points are mentioned. (1) *Dress*. "They have no distinguishing garb from Laymen and yet they took upon themselves to admonish the King's Commissioner in their last General Assembly for wearing a Scarlet Cloak, and told him plainly 'That it was not decent for His Grace to appear before them in such a Garb,' upon which My Lord told them, 'That he thought it as undecent for them to appear before him in grey Cloaks and Cravats'"<sup>2</sup> (p. 15). The instance is quoted of the chief heritor of the parish of Arrol (Errol?) at a Presbytery meeting saying of the ministers, "by their Garb no Body could know them and their Spirit was invisible" (p. 16). "However that they use no distinguishing Garb must be acknowledged to be very congruous, for truly they are but Laicks, and it will surpass all their learning to prove that they are ministers of Jesus Christ, but merely Preachers sent and called by the people" (p. 16). (2) *Bearing*. "The height of pride and Rusticity appears in their Conversation. To affront a Prelate openly is a most meritorious Work and such as becomes a true saint. To approve and applaud the murtherers of the Archbishop of St. Andrews is an infallible evidence of one thoroughly reformed" (p. 25). (3) *Covetousness*. "They do not object to Plurality of Benefices. Several of them are suing for five or six stipends at once, viz., the great

<sup>1</sup> Ridpath: *Answer to the Scottish Presbyterian Eloquence*, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> In 1696 the Synod of Dumfries advised all ministers to wear gowns and bands in the pulpit.

Apostles of the New Gospel, Dr. Rule, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Wm. Vetches, Mr. David Williamson, Mr. John Dickson and Mr. James Kirkton" (p. 30). (4) *Immorality*. Supposed instance cited (p. 5): see Ridpath's *Answer*, 3rd Section. (5) *Hypocrisy*. The anecdote of Mr. John Johnston and the dying gentleman in East Lothian (p. 31). (6) *Pampered not Persecuted*. The strange accusation is made that after 1662 the Presbyterian ministers "never suffered affliction . . . they were pampered instead of being persecuted, some of the Godly Sisters supplying them with plentiful Gratuities to their Families and money to their Purses; they really fared better than ever they did before by their Stipends. Several of them got Estates that way and grew fat and lusty under persecution" (p. 32). (7) *Mode of Worship*. "There is no Church but they differ from both in Worship and Practice" (p. 13). (8) *Prayer*. "I shall give you some Taste of that Extemporary Gibberish which they use instead of Prayer, and for which they have justled out, not only all the Liturgies of the Pure and Primitive Church, but even the Lord's Prayer itself, because it is an evident Argument and Pattern for Christians praying in a set Form" (p. 2). Much is made of the omission of the Lord's Prayer and the Creed in public worship; James Kirkton is quoted in saying before the magistrates of Edinburgh that the use of the Lord's Prayer was "the badge of the Episcopal Worship" (p. 13). Dr. Rule's own reason is the "smoothest alleged"—that "the use thereof is inconvenient" (p. 13). Then is given one of the most blasphemous efforts of the pamphlet when it is alleged (p. 14) that Mr. James Urquhart said, "if ever Christ was drunk upon Earth, it was when he made the Lord's Prayer." Again, "it is ordinary to hear the people say that, if Christ were on the earth again, he would think Shame of that Form; that they could make better themselves; and that he was but young when he composed it" (p. 14). "As for the Apostle's Creed, it is not so much as once mentioned at the baptizing of Infants,<sup>1</sup> for all they require at Baptism is that the Father promise to breed up the child in the Belief of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and that he shall adhere to all the National Engagements laying on them to be Presbyterians" (p. 14).<sup>2</sup>

*Sermons*: "Their Sermons are still upon the Government and the Times, preaching up the excellency of their Kirk Government" (p. 16). A Mr. Lighton is quoted as saying in reply to a reproof for not preaching up the times, "If you all preach up the times, you may allow one poor

<sup>1</sup> Ridpath in his *Answer* (p. 60) has a good reply in that the Westminster Confession has the Creed in it.

<sup>2</sup> This is a controversial point, denied by Gilbert Rule: *2nd Vindication*. "Yet much trusted Presbyterians affirm it and glory in it, e.g., Shields in *Hind let Loose*." S.P.E. (p. 14, note).

Brother to preach up Jesus Christ and Eternity" (p. 17). "But this was never like to be the design of their sermons, for trace them in their Politicks, Morals, Mysticks, and Metaphysicks, you shall find them selfish, singular and full of nonsensick Rhapsodies" (p. 17). Under the head of "politicks" the Presbyterians are charged with disloyalty to the King, John Dickson of Galloshiells being quoted as saying, "It is all one to sacrifice to Devils as to pay cess to King Charles" (p. 18). Sir George Mackenzie is quoted as proving "they plainly renounce Monarchy and all Power, but that of the Covenanted Kirk" (p. 18). They are also charged with having "since 1666 raised no less than three formidable Rebellions" (p. 18).<sup>1</sup> Here is to be noted the same deliberate confusing of the moderate and extreme Presbyterians. *Learning*: "It lies only in the study of some anti-Arminian Metaphysicks, and in the practical Divinity they pretend to draw from the Heads of Election and Reprobation, whereby they preach men out of their wits and very often into despair and self-murder" (p. 19). Instances are quoted (pp. 19-22) of men and women driven to insanity and suicide by Presbyterian preaching. "Morality is with them an outdated heathenish vertue and therefore such a Book as the Whole Duty of Man is looked on with wonderful contempt by them" (p. 22). *Anniversary Sermons*: Presbyterians are attacked for not observing these as commanded. "When the Privy Council appointed a sermon upon 30th January, 1690-1, the anniversary for the Martyrdom of King Charles the First, the grave noddies of the Assembly answered, 'we are to receive no Direction from the State nor to take our measures from the Council, especially in preaching Anniversary Sermons'" (p. 25). "All the Presbyterians profess that the keeping of Anniversary Days is Superstition and Popery. Yet they never missed to preach an Anniversary Sermon on Mr. Heriot, who built and endowed the great Hospital in the city of Edinburgh; the Reason is that for every sermon in Heriot's Commendation they get five pounds, a new Hat and a Bible" (pp. 29-30). *Pulpit Dialogues*: "Some have an odd way of acting in the Pulpit, personating Discourses often by Way of Dialogue betwixt them and the Devil" (p. 22). "The most of their Sermons are nonsensick Raptures, the abuse of Mystick Divinity, in canting Vocables, oft-times stuffed with impertinent and base Similes, and always with homely, coarse and ridiculous Expressions, very unsuitable to the Gravity and Solemnity that becomes Divinity."

This picture of the Presbyterian ministers and their characteristics is supplemented in the remaining section of the Pamphlet, which consists simply in a string of quotations from Sermons and Prayers reputed to have been delivered by Presbyterian preachers. There is no space to

<sup>1</sup> See Ridpath's *Answer*, p. 57.



quote even examples of these. They are to be found in pp. 97-116, and are from perhaps the most characteristic part of the Pamphlet. They are unverifiable and unreliable. Some are quaint expressions and Scotticisms of preachers and are most amusing and genial. Others again are bitter, and some are blasphemous and obscene and not to be repeated. The whole section should be read to get a complete insight into the style and object of the writing.

## X

With regard to the portrayal thus given of Presbyterians, clerical and lay, in this Pamphlet it may be observed what has been said of Macaulay's caricature of the Puritans in his *History of England*. If the description were simply meretricious it would not be worth the tribute of a refutation. It is the half-truth in the description that constitutes its danger. The exceptional is taken for the characteristic. Nobody would deny that there were wild and extreme statements made at that time, that there was a type of oratory that seems strange to the ears of our age that deals less in the crude metaphors and homely language of these men. But it might well be advanced that this work is full of exaggerations and dangerous half-truths in what is genuine, as well as the other gross and blasphemous and untruthful parts. That brings us to consider what attempts have been made to answer the Pamphlet and in what manner. The two contemporary answers best known are Gilbert Rule's *A Just and Modest Reproof of the Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*, 1693; and George Ridpath's *An Answer to the Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*, 1693, under the pseudonym *Will Laick*. This *Answer* of Ridpath's initiated a controversy. Dr. Monro replied in a Post-Script to his *Apology for the Clergy of Scotland*, and a reply was also made by a writer believed to be Dr. Wm. Strachan entitled "Some Remarks upon a late Pamphlet entitled *An Answer to the Scots Presbyterian Eloquence*, 1693." Another answer from the Episcopalian side was entitled *The Spirit of Calumny and Slander Examined, Chastised and Exposed*. Ridpath returned to the fray with a Pamphlet called *A Continuation of the Answer to the Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*; being a vindication of the Acts of that august Assembly, from the Clamours and Aspersion of the Scots Prelatical Clergy in their Libels printed in England, with a confutation of Dr. M(onro)'s *Postscript* in answer to the former, proving that it's not to the Church of England's interest to countenance the Scots outed Clergy, etc.," by Will Laick, London 1693. A further contribution by Ridpath was his *Scots Episcopal Innocence*. Ridpath's *Answer* is effective in places only. It is divided into three parts—"I, a Catalogue of the cruel and bloody laws

made by the Scots Prelatists against the Presbyterians ; II, Laying open the self-contradictions, impudent lies, horrible blasphemies and disloyalty of the obscene, scurrilous pamphlet called the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*; III, Being a collection of their ridiculous expressions in sermons and instances of the vitious lives of their Bishops and Clergy." The Second Part is the most effective. He has no difficulty in exposing the flaws of many of the arguments and inconsistency of statement of the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*. In the Third Part —a *tu quoque* reply to the charges of immorality, etc — he descends to the level of the Pamphlet he is answering and in places outdoes even it. It must be confessed on the whole that the Answers are less successful than the original. They are severe, forcible and angry, and perhaps that is why they fail. Their violent polemics tend to be forgotten whereas the satire and mocking raillery of the Prelatist work lives on. John Anderson of Dumbarton, 15 years later, adopted exactly the same line in replying to "Curate" Calder. Wodrow tells how when he remonstrated with Anderson on the harshness of *Curate Calder Whipt*, Anderson replied, "It is the only way to silence Caddel."<sup>1</sup> But was it? Ridicule often strikes home where a fierce and seemingly conclusive argument misses the mark.

## XI

One of the most effective Answers is Thomas McCrie's *Review of the Tales of my Landlord*. It is ostensibly a reply to Sir Walter Scott's picture of the Covenanters in *Old Mortality* and other of his writings, but it covers this whole field of Episcopalian attacks upon the Presbyterians. Two of his suggestions are interesting and might be worthy of further study.

One is that this Pamphlet was not just a controversial writing of the period 1690-1700. It is one of the forerunners of a series which have stretched down the years. McCrie says of the *Tales of my Landlord*, "We were not startled at the picture of our persecuted ancestors presented to us in the Tales. We had often seen it before. We could recognise every feature. There is only an alteration of the costume and border work and a slight softening of the colours to adapt it to the taste of the age. In all other respects the author has faithfully copied his great originals."<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to trace the line of thought. The Pamphlet, as we have already seen, was taken up with approval and backed by the chief Episcopal clergy of the day.<sup>3</sup> It is largely quoted in writings and pamphlets of

<sup>1</sup> Wodrow : *Correspondence*, Vol. I, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> McCrie : *Misc. Writings*, Vol. II, p. 329.

<sup>3</sup> Lawson : *History of the Scottish Episcopal Church*, p. 163.

the time. It comes up again in the early years of the 18th century and is hailed with delight by such writers as Dr. Archibald Pitcairn in his writings such as *Babell* and *The Assembly*. In a volume of Pamphlets in New College Library his *Assembly* is bound up with a copy of the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence* (1765) and some of Calder's writings—a very significant collocation. *The Assembly* is simply a play written mind of some of the men attacked in the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*. The Title Page states that it is “a Comedy done from the original Manuscript written in the year 1692.” Several of those pilloried in the 1692 Pamphlet appear under different names. The Earl of Crawford is *Lord Whigridden*, Gilbert Rule is *Mr. Salathiel Little-Sense*, “worthy Mr. Kirkton” is *Mr. Covenant Plain-Dealer*, Fraser of Brea is *Turbulent*, David Williamson is *Solomon Cherrytrees*. The play is gross in places and is chiefly interesting as carrying on in 1767 the attack begun in 1692 and linking up the two writings by pillorying the same characters. In the next century the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence* is quoted and referred to by writers like C. K. Sharpe (already noted) and Mark Napier in his controversial writings. McCrie says that Scott drew upon the same pamphlet in a book like *Old Mortality*.<sup>1</sup> And this catalogue might be extended, for in modern days one comes on quotations which have a strangely familiar sound to those who know the Pamphlet of 1692.

There is the further suggestion, however, that not only was this Pamphlet one of the originals of a long series of writings through the years, but also it was more than just a controversial pamphlet written to score off Presbyterian opponents. What then was the object of the Pamphlet? Why was it written originally? Principal Monro in his *Letter to a Friend*, 1693, suggests that the motive was to “inform the world a little of the qualifications and learning of our Presbyterian doctors, and if it were possible, to make them sensible of their own infirmities and for the future ashamed of their insolence.”<sup>2</sup> Lawson, in his *History*, says it was written because “those who had smarted for their religious opinion on the Episcopal side resolved to act upon the offensive by producing a work, the object of which was to hold up the Presbyterian divines to the ridicule of the world.”<sup>3</sup> But following Gilbert Rule, in his *Second Vindication*, McCrie has this remark, “When they were restrained from torturing and murdering the Presbyterians, the Scottish Episcopalians and Jacobites, abusing the lenity of a new and tolerant Government, which they eagerly sought to overturn, took up the pen, and with hands yet besmeared with

<sup>1</sup> McCrie : *Misc. Writings*, Vol. II, pp. 336-338.

<sup>2</sup> Monro : *Letter to a Friend*, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Lawson : *History of Scottish Episcopal Church*, p. 158.

the blood of their countrymen, employed it in writing against them calumnious invectives and scurrilous lampoons which they industriously circulated in England where the facts were not known, with the view of instigating the English Church to take part with them first in preventing, and afterwards in overturning, the establishment of Presbytery.”<sup>1</sup> This is to give a more sinister significance to the pamphlet of the times. McCrie says, “The writers of the time were abundantly sanguine in their expectations of success and dreamed of nothing but blowing up the Presbyterian Church by this well-contrived plot.”<sup>2</sup> McCrie indeed links up the whole movement with the “writings of court sycophants during the reign of the two last Stuarts, and of the High Church and Jacobitish faction after the Revolution in England, Ireland and Scotland—as seen in the pages of Jeffries and Mackenzie, Butler, Dryden and Swift, Colvil, Pitcairn or Rhind.” He quotes John Anderson’s *Defence of the Presbyterians*, p. 4: “’Tis difficult to name that ill thing which a Heylin, a Hicks, a Lessley, a Sacheverel, a Calder or some other very reverend divine has not writ of them or imputed to them.” That is to say the suggestion is that a pamphlet like the *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence* was not just a writing to score off the Presbyterians, but part of a scheme to overturn the Presbyterian Establishment altogether. Evidence for this may be found in such an extract as this from the Preface to *Assembly*, “that the civil government may be awakened and roused to rid us of the gang, who injuriously treat all good and learned men, and are enemies to human society itself.” To this end the aid of the Church of England was sought. It is a complaint of the Presbyterian writers of the time that most of the pamphlets of the other side are published in London and are hardly available in Scotland! Gilbert Rule in the Preface to his *Vindication* says, “Prints have been emitted by these men, containing partly historical passages full of lies and reproaches and partly false and spiteful representations of our principles and way; to which an answer such as they need and deserve, shall ere long be given if the Lord permit. That this hath not been done sooner hath been in a great measure caused by there being but one copy of each of these books that we could find in all Scotland. In this our adversaries have used a piece of cunning which is, that these books were spread in England only where the things contained could not be known or examined.”<sup>3</sup> Principal Monro and others denied this charge and suggested that they had no liberty of press or to import books being the minority party. Rule replied again, “those of their railing pamphlets

<sup>1</sup> McCrie: *Misc. Writings*, Vol. II, p. 334. See also Rule, Preface to his *Second Vindication*.

<sup>2</sup> McCrie: *Misc. Writings*, Vol. II, p. 336.

<sup>3</sup> Rule: *Vindication of the Church of Scotland*; Preface to 2nd Edition, 1691.

which have been imported were never challenged, none ever came to trouble for them, though we well know who brought them into the Kingdom."<sup>1</sup>

An attempt has been made then in this Paper to look at this interesting Pamphlet in its original setting and to consider something of its contents, authorship and motive. Taken in its setting of the decade 1690-1700 it reveals to us something of the controversy of the times, the rival sides and the chief protagonists. And in its wider setting the Pamphlet is seen as having a place in a whole series of controversial writings extending through the years and supplying material for many subsequent writers. It may be hoped that the controversy between Episcopalian and Presbyterian in this bitter sense is over, but if ever it should revive again, one would not be greatly astonished to see produced things that would take us back to that writing published in 1692 and "entitled" *The Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*.

<sup>1</sup> Rule: "*A Just and Modest Reproof to a Pamphlet called The Scottish Presbyterian Eloquence*, p. 34.

